

PhotoSpiva 2007 is selected from 500 photographic (analog and digital) pieces (tiny and large, glossy and matte, black-and-white and color) by 107 artists (amateurs and professionals) working in highly diverse modes.

Contemporary visual artists use diverse media. The images entered for consideration in PhotoSpiva 2007 represented work created with a variety of analog and digital capture and output processes applied in a variety of manners; flawless and distressed surfaces; collage and montage; colorful bi-products of controlled energetic accidents employing a variety of uses of electromagnetism and chemistry; etc.

Contemporary artists create diverse types of artifacts. The images considered were created through a variety of modes of practice, employing varied visual genres and languages: documents; abstractions; social commentary; celebrations of beauty; humor; intimate disclosure; self-analysis; self-conscious posing; kitsch; reference to art historical themes (occidental and oriental); media referents; artifacts of process (historical and soon-to-be historical); etc.

The question "Is it photography?" is not very useful. A more useful question is, "What kind of photography is it?"

In our highly dynamic, diverse, pluralistic, post-post-modern world, to make qualitative distinctions, what criteria are most useful and how can they be best used?

Here are some of the things I consider when looking at images: a sensitive application of craft; appropriate contextualization; an understanding of the history of ideas and their development within the visual arts; an intelligent exploration of ideas (with extra emphasis when insights arise that seem fresh beyond what we already know); a sense of mystery (escaping easy definition despite our best efforts to understand the work, its essential nature continues to elude us, begging us to return to it again and again, hopefully with each revisiting we learn more); authenticity (a quality akin to originality but not to be confused with novelty, a uniqueness rising out the ground of individual being truthfully disclosed); communion (the ability to reach out to, embrace, and be overwhelmed by the extraordinary world we live in).

To varying degrees and in varying proportions, all these qualities could be found in the work considered. It was a pleasure to look at this work. It was a highly enjoyable challenge to attempt to fully appreciate it. And, it was instructive to do so. This was time well spent.

I would like to thank the staff and volunteers at Spiva Center for the Arts and all of the artists who participated in this delightful celebration of images. And, I'd like to thank you for the devotion of your time and your respectful consideration of their contributions.

—John Paul Caponigro

1st Place

body of work

The *Mirror* series features seascapes that incorporate a mirror, allowing multiple views of the scene to simultaneously appear. The mirror seems to be a window, a door, a wall. The coastline imparts a feeling of being at the edge of the known world, a sense of being able to go no further. To transcend these limitations is to go beyond the natural world and into the spiritual.

Mirrors coax us to look for ourselves; yet in these images, we see only light or detail of the scene. The subtle realms reflected in the glass highlight our awareness of the unseen, and the fact that our own reflection, the human self,

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Mirror #101

is missing. In these images, the reflections and shadows of unseen elements hint at the existence of a soul and its fear of annihilation. By illuminating some of the atmosphere and mystery of our experience, I hope to enable us to imagine with our eyes open and to appreciate the evanescence of life.